

# *Interrelating State Resources*

Louisiana's history, culture and natural attributes provide the Office of State Parks with a valuable resource to draw from and to provide for the recreational and educational needs of Louisianians and their visitors. This plan considers holdings, as well as recreational resources not owned by the state, as important elements in the overall pool of resources.

The State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 sets forth many ways for the Louisiana State Parks System to pool its resources, which involves additions to present holdings, development of new facilities and concepts for the marketing of parks, and commemorative and preservation areas as clusters or packages rather than as independent resources. Examples of two of the major concepts, Recreational Chains and the development of parks as Recreational Hubs, follows.

## THE RECREATIONAL CHAINS

The Louisiana Gulf Coast and the vast wetland areas in the southern part of the state are among the most significant natural recreational resources in Louisiana. The opportunities for fishing, bird watching, hiking and boating abound. The recreational potential of the area combined with the Cajun culture and ease of accessibility create a major ecotourism draw, however, State Parks presence is minimal. The action plan calls for a series of coastal state parks and preservation areas extending from Plaquemines Parish to Cameron Parish. These facilities would provide access to this vast recreational resource providing actual coastal fronting parks, as well as "base camp" parks (overnight areas with direct access into the marshes and estuaries of the coastal zone).

The popular scenic rivers in the southeast part of the state are a natural draw for boating and fishing enthusiasts and have good access from the major highway system. This plan recommends a series of river-oriented state parks, existing and proposed, in Regions One and Two which, in combination with existing private establishments, create a chain of recreational links extending from above McComb, Mississippi to the Pearl River.

The beautiful and bountiful lakes of the northern part of the state were a natural draw for State Parks development in the previous plan. The existing parks are currently providing for much of the recreational needs for the region, but need additional facilities and promotion to fully meet their potential. These peaceful, natural resource-based parks currently create a chain of similar, but varying resources that should be promoted as a group of related lake-oriented parks.

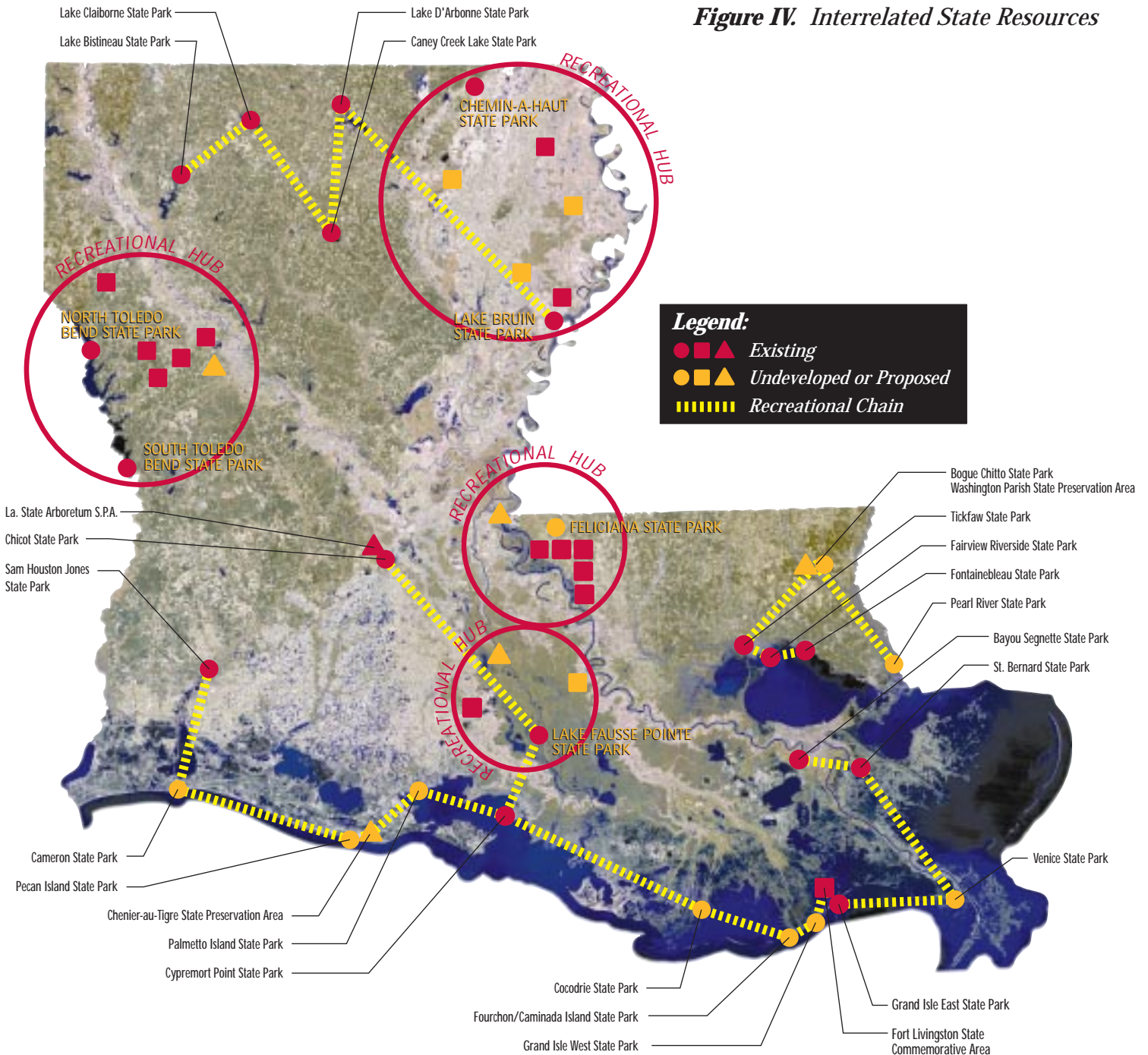
## RECREATIONAL HUBS

As set forth by the classification system, state parks is the only class of holdings that provides overnight facilities. In some cases, however, there is great need to provide these overnight facilities in proximity to existing and proposed commemorative and preservation areas. Providing new state parks or promoting existing parks in close proximity to commemorative and preservation areas as overnight destinations will create recreational clusters and, thereby, more fully meet the mission of the Office of State Parks. State parks, where possible, should be used as "destination hubs" where visitors can stay overnight and gain access to other recreational and educational assets in an area, as well as enjoy the assets of the park itself.

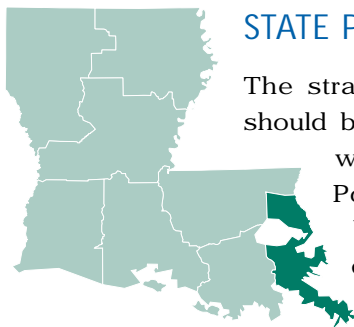
Examples of this concept are: the proposed Feliciana State Park in Region Two, Lake Fausse Pointe State Park in Region Four, North Toledo Bend State Park in Region Seven, Lake Bruin and Chemin-A-Haut State Parks in Region Eight. These parks should be promoted as central hubs where visitors can

stay overnight, enjoy the natural resources of the park, but also have good access to the numerous state commemorative areas, state preservation areas, and other privately provided recreational and educational assets of the area.

**Figure IV. Interrelated State Resources**



## Region One



### STATE PARKS

The strategy for existing state park sites should be to develop a recreational cluster with strong links to the north of Lake Pontchartrain and the wetlands that border the metropolitan area immediately to the south. State parks, state commemorative areas, and state preservation areas should be clustered to better promote regional offerings.

**ACTION :** Complete the development of each existing state park in accordance with its master plan.

**Fontainebleau** and **Fairview-Riverside State Parks** could support one another through joint promotion. **Fontainebleau** has more space for development of new facilities. Given its growth potential and the changes in its physical site over the years, the site master plan should be updated. **Fairview-Riverside** is smaller and has little possibility of acquiring additional land; thus, it should have less new development. It must be monitored for its carrying capacity to avoid overuse. **Fontainebleau** should be marketed for heavier use; **Fairview-Riverside** should be marketed for its quaint character and charm. These two state parks should be

viewed as complementing, not competing facilities.

**St. Bernard State Park** and **Bayou Segnette State Park** are both oriented to day use recreation. The elements remaining on the master plans for these two facilities should be completed. It is important to be aware of the differences between these two state parks when developing programming and marketing strategies. While they should not be marketed as competing facilities, they should be marketed in similar ways and to similar users. **St. Bernard State Park** should take advantage of the Mississippi River for viewing, walks and boat trips since it is the only state park in Louisiana located on the Mississippi River; and **Bayou Segnette State Park** should continue to take advantage of its constructed day use areas and its overnight accommodations as its main attraction for tourists visiting New Orleans.

**Grand Isle East State Park** provides a recreational node on the Gulf of Mexico. **Grand Isle West**, an undeveloped site, should be master planned and developed to incorporate features, where possible, which are not already available at the East site. These two sites should be complementary, and non-competing. Their assets should be marketed as a cluster clearly showing each site's recreational opportunities.

**ACTION :** Develop three new state parks in Region One.

The Action Plan calls for the development of three new state parks in Region One over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario for development of this region would include the development of **Grand Isle West**, a current Office of State Parks holding, a site near the Gulf of Mexico in the **Venice area**, and one on or near the **Pearl River**.

A site in the **Venice area** would allow access to the mouth of the Mississippi River and the recreational opportunities in the area.





# PMENT STRATEGIES

It would also serve the New Orleans area more effectively than the Grand Isle State Park due to easier access via Louisiana Highway 23. This Venice Area State Park would be the easternmost anchor of the proposed series of state parks which would provide access to the entire Louisiana Gulf Coast.

Development of the current holding at **Grand Isle West** is recommended. This could act as an annex to the **Proposed Fourchon/Caminada Island State Park** which would offer a larger land base, more overnight facilities, and different uses from those offered at Grand Isle West. Recommendations for proposed development of the state park at **Fourchon / Caminada Island** are made in the action plan in section V-B:3, in Region Three (even though the site crosses both Region One and Three). The proposed development would range westward from Caminada Pass, approximately eight miles to Fourchon in Region Three. The proposed development of this area could include an entrance on the Caminada Pass side as well as one on the Fourchon side.

The **Pearl River** site, proposed in the GSRI plan and Act 314-74, would be a state park bordering the river basin with access to the river. It would provide for the recreational needs of Region One and could be a part of a complex of related facilities along the Pearl and Bogue Chitto Rivers making these popular fishing and boating sites more readily accessible. While located in Region One, it could be closely linked to a Region Two cluster of state parks and related activities, thus also serving the recreational needs of Region Two. Given its proximity to Mississippi and interstate travel, the **Pearl River site** would also be a natural ecotourism draw.

Given the natural resources and existing tourism attractions, developments in this region are investments in ecotourism. This idea should be promoted to the fullest extent possible.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region One is **\$34,356,250**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for three proposed state parks (**Venice, Grand Isle West** and **Pearl River**) in Region One is **\$23,126,500**. The total estimated acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state parks, existing and proposed, in Region One is **\$57,482,750**.*



## STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

Develop and promote a historic cluster of the existing front line, 1800 period forts (**Fort Pike, Fort Macomb** and **Fort Livingston**.) These forts were initially developed as a system of installations to protect New Orleans from coastal invasion. They should function to complement, rather than compete, with each other. Services and facilities should not be duplicated, but consolidated wherever possible. This is particularly important between **Fort Pike** and **Fort Macomb**, given their close proximity. Efforts should be made to operate both facilities as separate units of one area to



reduce expenses. The location of these forts creates an opportunity to develop interpretive programs which explain not only the individual installations, but the entire system of fortifications. **Fort Pike**, the only fort of the three currently open, needs additional funding to bring it to the level of the average state commemorative area. **Fort Macomb** is in the best physical condition, but needs to be developed to standards so it can be opened to the public. **Fort Livingston** is an interesting site, but is being lost to the forces of nature. Access to the fort is difficult due to its location on Grand Terre Island in the Gulf of Mexico. This site is accessible only by boat and development of docking facilities should promote its use as a commemorative ruin.

**Fort Pike** should be the flagship example of this type of fortification due to its proximity to New Orleans and Interstates 10 and 12 and its present level of development. In addition to the museum, a visitor's information center and interpretive program which portrays the history of these forts could be located here. Pre-arranged tours of the forts could start at **Fort Pike**. Promotion to schools and to Civil War enthusiasts should be increased.

**ACTION : Continue the development of the existing state commemorative areas in Region One as master planned.**

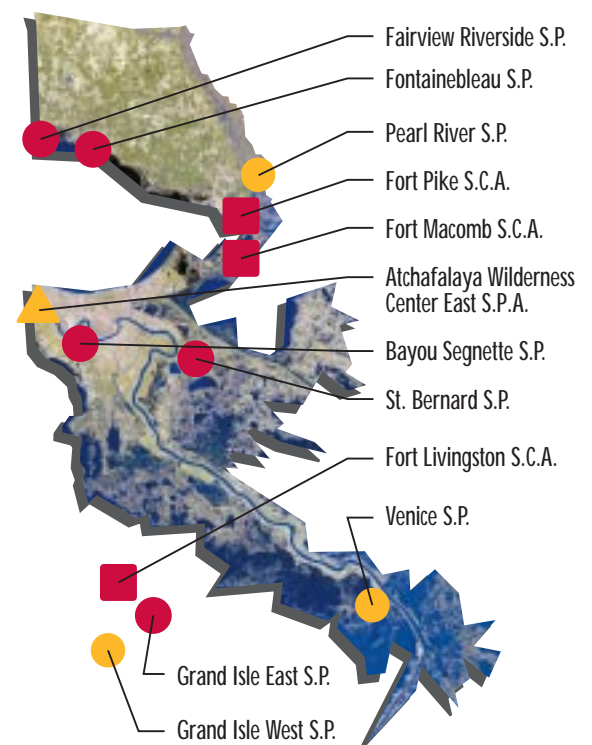
The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state commemorative areas in Region One is **\$6,097,339**. There are no proposed state new commemorative areas in Region One.

## STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

There are currently no state preservation areas in Region One. The 12,000 - 20,000 acres of land as referenced on page 24 of this document should be pursued as additional land for the development of a state preservation area. This land could be developed into the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East to provide similar services as those provided at the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center West.

**ACTION : Develop the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East State Preservation Area upon the donation of the 12,000 - 20,000 acres from the US Army Corps of Engineers.**

The approximate land acquisition and development cost for the proposed state preservation area in Region One is \$7,000,000.



**Figure V. - REGION ONE FACILITIES**

● ■ ▲ Existing  
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

## Region Two



### STATE PARKS

The strategy for existing sites should be to develop recreational clusters around the state commemorative areas (Audubon, Port Hudson, Centenary and Locust Grove) in the western part of the region and around **Tickfaw State Park** and the proposed state parks on the **Tangipahoa** and **Bogue Chitto** rivers in the eastern part of the region, and around the proposed **Pearl River State Park** in Region One. The state commemorative areas and other historic sites in the region form a cluster of related areas that possess the potential to become a major tourism and recreation destination. The addition of a state park in the area could create a hub for visitors to stay overnight while enjoying the natural, cultural and historic features of this area. More importantly, it would provide much-needed recreational and educational facilities for the Baton Rouge area.

**ACTION :** Complete the development of each existing state park in accordance with its master plans.

**Tickfaw State Park** is in the development stage and is scheduled to open in 1997-98. The park will provide overnight facilities. **Tickfaw State Park** is a well-located facility in the lower part of the region where a transition is made from high terrace to lowland basin. This site has the potential to become a great ecotourism draw due to its proximity to major highways, natural resources, and its master plan concept.

**ACTION :** Develop three new state parks in Region Two.

The Action Plan calls for the development of three new state parks in Region Two over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario would include the development of the **Bogue**

**Chitto River** site, which was proposed in the GSRI plan and Act 314-75, the development of a state park in the **Felicianas** and a state park on either **Alligator Bayou/Spanish Lake** or the **Tangipahoa River**.

The **Bogue Chitto** site could become a part of a series of recreational links along this popular fishing and boating river extending from above McComb, Mississippi, to the Pearl River. The use of the existing Washington Parish State Preservation Area site as the **Bogue Chitto State Park** site is recommended. A series of river parks and outfitters are already in place and this proposed state park could continue the linkage to the **Pearl River State Park** proposed for Region One.

A site in the **Felicianas**, on Thompson Creek or another similar water body in the area, would provide creek beds of sandy clear water well-suited for passive water recreation such as wading and relaxing. The existing topographic change and natural wooded areas would be excellent for nature walks and hiking. If a quality water-based resource is not available, another development concept for a park in this region is to develop a state park with a 19th century theme. This concept uses the collective historic aspects of the area as the resource and would be designed to complement this historic theme. Whether the site includes a natural water-based resource or not, the park would have great access to the many state commemorative areas, plantation homes and historical areas and should express this historic character. Other recreational resources are local golf courses nearby. A park in the Felicianas would serve as an overnight hub for visitors and would provide access to the many recreational opportunities both on-site and in the area. This would act as a linking element between several existing Office of State Parks' resources.

A new state park at **Alligator Bayou/Spanish Lake** would provide a quality recreational and educational experience in a natural setting while providing a much-needed park in close



proximity to Baton Rouge. Because of the water quality problems which currently exist, this site can not be considered for state park status at this time. However, efforts to correct the current problems are under way and may be successful within the next five to ten years.

A site on the **Tangipahoa River**, once one of the best canoeing and tubing rivers in the state, should remain in the long-range plans. There is strong local support in Tangipahoa Parish for a basin-wide recreation plan that could include a state park. Given the water

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Two is **\$10,821,500**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for proposed state parks in Region Two (**Bogue Chitto, Feliciana**, and either **Tangipahoa** or **Spanish Lake**) is **\$45,047,800**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state parks, existing and proposed, in Region Two is **\$55,869,300**.



*Centenary State Commemorative Area*

quality problems, this site cannot be considered for state park status at this time. However, efforts to correct the current problems are under way and may prove successful within the next five to ten years. This could make this area worthy of inclusion in the Louisiana State Parks System. Other resources in the region which might meet the criteria for state park status are the **Lower Amite River, Old River, False River and Lake Maurepas**. Indications are that sufficient land is not available along these resources. However, if parcels of land become available, new state park sites should be considered along these resources. However, the goals for this region call for the establishment of no more than three new state parks over the next fifteen-year period.

## STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

A cluster of state commemorative areas in the northern part of the region related to the era before, during and after the Civil War should be developed. This area is rich with both public and private antebellum historic sites, and the state commemorative areas should be the main tourism draws. **Audubon** and **Port Hudson** are exemplary state commemorative areas. Their historical significance, facility development, interpretive programming and operation are outstanding. They are already significant tourism draws. These two sites should be used to promote each other, and as anchors to promote **Centenary** and **Locust Grove** as related historical side trips. Further development of **Audubon, Port Hudson** and **Centenary** to complete the master plans for each site is recommended. This would improve the experience and is recommended. Additional interpretive programs at all sites are needed.

**ACTION :** Continue development of the existing state commemorative areas in the region according to the master plans and acquire and develop **Rosedown Plantation** and **Plaquemine Lock** as new state commemorative areas.

The return of **Plaquemine Lock** to the Office of State Parks is recommended, to be re-developed as a state commemorative area representing River Navigation, an historical unit presently unrepresented. Since the site

was at one time a state commemorative area, it should require relatively little redevelopment costs. **Rosedown Plantation** is recommended for acquisition and development as an additional major tourism draw in the northern part of the region to complement existing holdings.

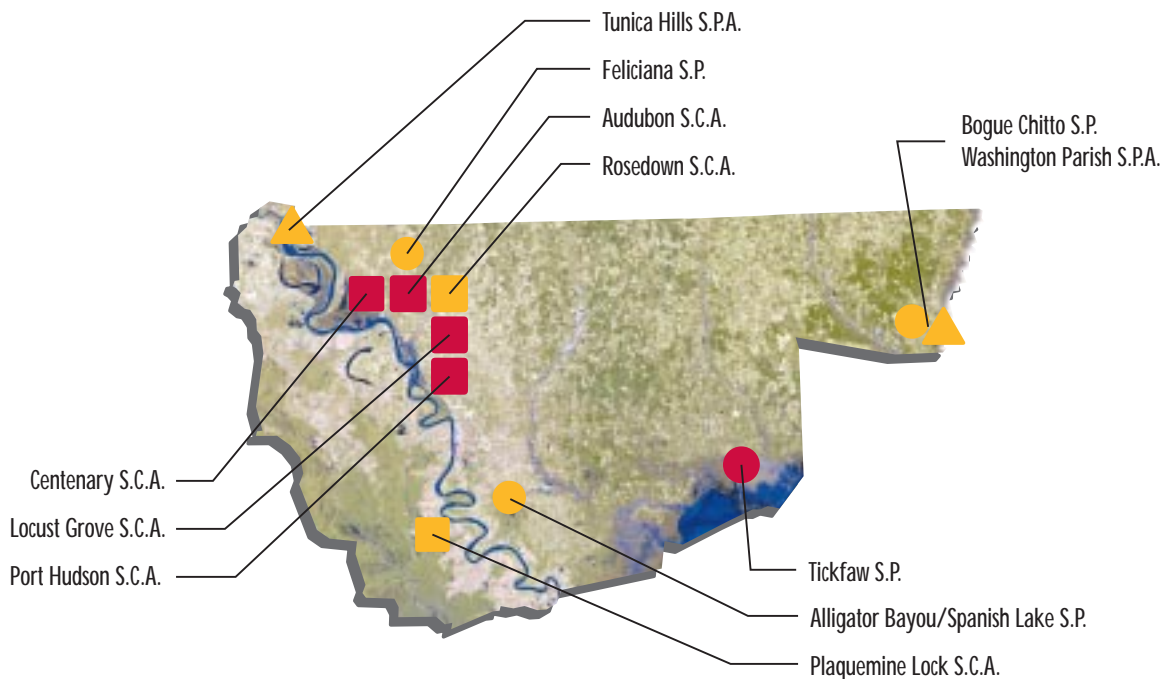
*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state commemorative areas in Region Two is \$2,574,850. The estimated acquisition and development cost for proposed new state commemorative areas in Region Two is \$10,061,000. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Two is \$12,635,850.*

## STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

This plan recommends the development of two state preservation areas in Region Two during the next fifteen years. Both of the sites, **Tunica Hills** and **Washington Parish** are undeveloped Office of State Parks holdings. The **Tunica Hills** site is a spectacular representation of the Mississippi River Bluffs and the mixed hardwood plant associations. Sites similar to these in Mississippi are currently open to the public and attract considerable use. The **Washington Parish** site is more appropriately utilized as the Bogue Chitto State Park site and the designation should be changed.

**ACTION : Develop the two existing state preservation areas in Region Two.**

*The approximate land acquisition and development cost for the proposed items at **Tunica Hills** and **Washington Parish State Preservation Areas** is \$4,511,800.*

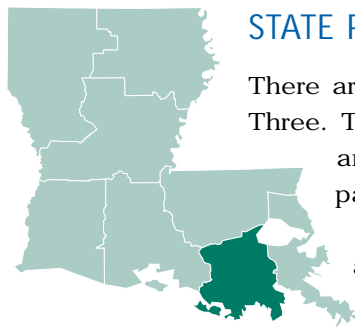


**Figure VI. - REGION TWO FACILITIES**

● ■ ▲ Existing  
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed



# Region Three

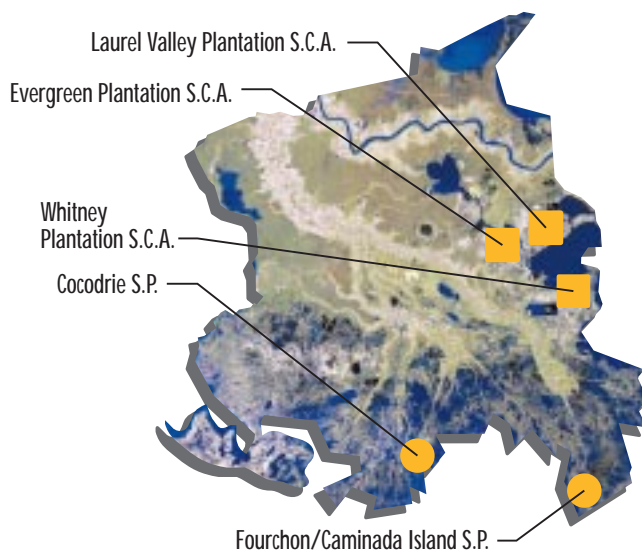


## STATE PARKS

There are no existing state parks in Region Three. The major population centers, Houma and Thibodaux, are in the southern part of the region and are in close proximity to the vast coastal recreation area. Development in the region should focus on that part of the region.

**ACTION : Develop two new state parks in Region Three.**

The Action Plan calls for the development of two new state parks in Region Three over the next fifteen years. The recommended scenario would include the development of state parks in both the **Fourchon / Caminada Island** and **Cocodrie areas**. This would provide accommodations and further access to the natural marsh and coastal areas. Additionally, it would complete a series of state parks extending from the proposed Venice State Park westward to Terrebonne Bay. These state parks would increase coastal access from all of the major population centers in the southeastern part of the state. Schematic recommendations on these potential areas are made in the Action Plan.



**Figure VII. - REGION THREE FACILITIES**

● ■ ▲ Existing  
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

There are no existing state parks in Region Three. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state parks in Region Three is **\$31,607,750**.

## STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

There are currently no state commemorative areas in this region. However, the acquisition of either **Laurel Valley Plantation** in Lafourche Parish, or **Whitney Plantation** in St. John the Baptist Parish, is recommended for development as a state commemorative area representing the historic sugar industry in Louisiana. **Laurel Valley** would be the first choice. If it is unavailable for acquisition, **Whitney Plantation** is recommended. **Evergreen Plantation**, also in St. John the Baptist Parish, is recommended for acquisition and development as well. Evergreen has one of the most intact sets of actual slave cabins in the South, and its interpretive focus should be pre-Civil War, African-American Culture. The two sites which are developed should be clustered and marketed together to the extent possible.

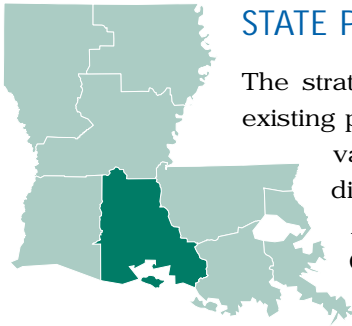
**ACTION : Acquire and develop either Laurel Valley Plantation or Whitney Plantation and Evergreen Plantation as state commemorative areas.**

There are no existing state commemorative areas in Region Three. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state commemorative areas in Region Three is either **Laurel Valley Plantation** or **Whitney Plantation** and **Evergreen Plantation**, **\$11,039,500**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Three is **\$11,039,500**.

## STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

There are no existing or proposed state preservation areas in Region Three.

## Region Four



### STATE PARKS

The strategy in this region is to market the existing parks as facilities which offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities in diverse settings. The Louisiana State Arboretum State Preservation Area, Chicot Lake, and hiking experiences should be highlighted at **Chicot State Park**; the Atchafalaya Basin should be the focus of marketing for **Lake Fausse Pointe State Park**; **Cypremort Point State Park** should emphasize access to the Gulf of Mexico, and **Palmetto Island State Park**, once developed, should focus on wetland settings. Development of this state park should be high priority. There are other recreational opportunities in the region such as Longfellow-Evangeline State Commemorative Area, Avery Island, Jefferson Island, Jean

Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve, Chitimacha Cultural Center, and Prairie Acadian Cultural Center in Eunice, all of which can be promoted along with the state parks. The Acadian culture is an excellent tourist attraction, and the parks should be viewed as complementing this tourism interest. Programming should emphasize the unique culture of the area and on the Atchafalaya Basin. Both should play a prominent role in the marketing and continued development of this region.

**ACTION : Develop two new state parks in Region Four.**

The Action Plan calls for the development of two new state parks in Region Four over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario

would include the development of the **Palmetto Island** site, which is in the planning stages; it should receive high priority. This, along with the development of a new park at **Pecan Island**, would add two parks to the series of Louisiana Gulf Coast-oriented parks.

**Palmetto Island State Park** is a current holding with a high degree of local support. The master plan needs to be revised to comply with the wetland designation. The park will provide a recreational resource in a wetland area and fits well into the "chain of Gulf Coast State Parks." Development of a state park in the **Pecan Island** area could provide easy access into the marshes and estuaries of the

area. This "base camp" park's main purpose is to provide facilities that would allow camping, cabins and other recreational opportunities for extended stays not provided by the private sector.

*The estimated cost for completion of*

*the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Four is **\$30,101,250**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state parks in Region Four is **\$8,749,488**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state parks, existing and proposed, in Region Four is **\$38,850,738**.*



### STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

The recommended strategy for Region Four is to expand the existing state commemorative area at **Longfellow-Evangeline** to enhance the facilities and programming which currently commemorate the French-speaking peoples of Louisiana. Given the popularity of the Acadian culture, efforts to